

昆虫 RNA 干扰中双链 RNA 的转运方式

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摘要: 昆虫 RNA 干扰主要指外源双链 RNA 诱发的, 通过阻碍特定基因的翻译或转录, 引起内源目标信使 RNA 沉默的机制。由于 RNA 干扰的特异性, RNA 干扰技术主要应用于昆虫功能基因组和害虫防治的研究。本综述主要对双链 RNA 引起昆虫体内 RNA 干扰研究中双链 RNA 转运的 3 种方法(显微注射法、喂食法及浸泡与转染法)进行介绍和讨论。这 3 种方法中, 显微注射法能将精确数量的双链 RNA 迅速转运到目标组织, 更适合实验室基因功能的研究; 喂食法操作简单快速, 适合高通量的基因筛选; 浸泡与转染法也适合大规模的基因筛选, 但更常见于细胞研究中。

关键词: 昆虫; 基因沉默; RNA 干扰; 双链 RNA 转运; 害虫防治

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dsRNA delivery methods for RNA interference in insects

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Abstract: RNA interference (RNAi) in insects mostly refers to the process that double-stranded RNA (dsRNA) silences the specific target messenger RNA (mRNA) via inhibition of translation or transcription. Recently, RNAi technology has been mainly applied in the research of functional genomics and pest control due to its high specificity. This review focuses on three common ways (microinjection, feeding, and soaking and transfection), which deliver dsRNA in entomological RNAi research. Among these three ways, microinjection can deliver exact amount of dsRNA to target tissues, which is more suitable for gene functional study in the laboratory. Feeding is easy and fast to perform, which is suitable for high-throughput gene screening. Soaking and transfection is also suitable for large-scale gene screening, but more commonly used in cell research.

Key words: Insect; gene silence; RNA interference (RNAi); dsRNA delivery; pest control

昆虫 RNA 干扰(RNA interference, RNAi)主要由外源双链 RNA(double-stranded RNA, dsRNA)介导下, 被切割成小分子 RNA, 引起内源互补目标信使 RNA(messenger RNA, mRNA)沉默的机制(Zamore, 2001)。自从首次在秀丽隐杆线虫 *Caenorhabditis elegans* 发现注射双链 RNA 引起基因沉默的现象(Fire *et al.*, 1998), 双链 RNA 引起的 RNA 干扰陆续在双翅目(Kennerdell and Carthew, 1998)、鞘翅目(Tomoyasu and Denell, 2004)、鳞翅目(Terenius *et al.*, 2011)、膜翅目(Farooqui *et al.*,

2003)等昆虫中发现。由于 RNA 干扰具有很强的特异性, 这项技术也被运用到害虫的防治中(Baum *et al.*, 2007; Price and Gatehouse, 2008; Firmino *et al.*, 2013)。

一般来说, 双链 RNA 进入细胞后才能诱导 RNA 干扰反应。因此, 细胞对双链 RNA 的吸收和转运是影响 RNA 干扰最主要的因素。关于双链 RNA 的吸收方式, 目前有两种潜在的机制: 秀丽隐杆线虫体内跨膜通道介导的途径以及果蝇 S2 细胞通过吞噬作用的途径。在秀丽隐杆线虫中, SID-1

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(systemic RNA interference defective 1) 是系统 RNA 干扰中必需的因子 (Feinberg and Hunter, 2003; Jose and Hunter, 2007); 秀丽隐杆线虫 SID-1 的同源基因可以在鞘翅目的赤拟谷盗 *Tribolium castaneum*、玉米根虫 *Diabrotica virgifera* 和马铃薯甲虫 *Leptinotarsa decemlineata*、鳞翅目的家蚕 *Bombyx mori* 和小菜蛾 *Plutella xylostella*、膜翅目的西方蜜蜂 *Apis mellifera*、半翅目的棉蚜 *Aphis gossypii* 和褐飞虱 *Nilaparvata lugens*, 以及直翅目的美国沙漠蝗 *Schistocerca americana* 和飞蝗 *Locusta migratoria* 等昆虫中均有发现, 在双翅目的黑腹果蝇 *Drosophila melanogaster* 中还未发现; 然而, SID-1 并不完全是昆虫 RNA 干扰所必需的, 比如赤拟谷盗的 RNA 干扰不需要 SID-1, 而同一目的玉米根虫和马铃薯甲虫则需要 (Wang *et al.*, 2014; Cappelle *et al.*, 2016)。在果蝇的 S2 细胞中, 清道夫受体 SR-CI 和 Eater 也在双链 RNA 的吸收过程中起着重要的作用 (Saleh *et al.*, 2006; Ulvila *et al.*, 2006)。

根据双链 RNA 进入细胞的方式, RNA 干扰可以分为细胞内 RNA 干扰 (intracellular RNAi) 和细胞外 RNA 干扰 (extracellular RNAi) 两种 (Huvenne and Smagghe, 2010)。细胞内 RNA 干扰可通过转基因、转染、电穿孔以及对细胞或者胚胎直接注射双链 RNA 实现。细胞外 RNA 干扰包括了环境 RNA 干扰 (environmental RNAi) 和系统 RNA 干扰 (systemic RNAi)。环境 RNA 干扰指从外界环境中直接吸收双链 RNA; 系统 RNA 干扰指基因沉默可以从细胞传递到细胞, 从组织传递到组织, 干扰效果可以传递到下一代 (Huvenne and Smagghe, 2010), 可通过胸腔注射、喂食、浸泡实现。

除此之外, 也可以通过转基因的方法, 使双链 RNA 稳定遗传。第一个转基因黑腹果蝇是通过表达发夹结构的双链 RNA 而获得可遗传的 RNA 干扰效应 (Kennerdell and Carthew, 2000)。家蚕也可以通过转基因的方法获得可遗传性的 RNA 干扰 (Kanginakudru *et al.*, 2007; Dai *et al.*, 2008)。然而, 目前其他昆虫进行转基因的方式可行性不高。因此, 找到简单可行的转运双链 RNA 的方法, 是目前昆虫进行 RNA 干扰手段的挑战。

在昆虫研究中, 目前主要有 3 种转运双链 RNA 的方法, 包括显微注射法、喂食法及浸泡与转染法。显微注射法是昆虫研究中最常见的转运双链 RNA 的方法, 包括胸腔的注射和胚胎的注射 (Arakane *et al.*, 2004; Suzuki *et al.*, 2008); 其中, 第一个成功的

注射实验是果蝇的胚胎注射 (Kennerdell and Carthew, 1998)。喂食法是将双链 RNA 直接喂给昆虫, 或者通过喂食混有双链 RNA 的食物或表达双链 RNA 的细菌及转基因植物, 从而引起 RNA 干扰 (Baum *et al.*, 2007)。浸泡是指将虫体直接泡在含有双链 RNA 的溶液中引起 RNA 干扰, 第一个成功的体外实验是将 S2 细胞浸泡在含有双链 RNA 的培养基中 (Clemens *et al.*, 2000)。虽然直接浸泡虫体的方法已有先例 (Clemens *et al.*, 2000; Whyard *et al.*, 2009), 目前浸泡法大部分应用于细胞培养中 (Whyard *et al.*, 2009)。转染则是通过转染试剂将双链 RNA 转入细胞中 (Whyard *et al.*, 2009; Johnson *et al.*, 2010)。之前的研究表明, 双链 RNA 能够被设计成特定的杀虫剂 (Whyard *et al.*, 2009), 因此, 通过提高双链 RNA 在昆虫中的转运效率, 提高 RNA 干扰的效率, 提高害虫的控制率, 具有重要的理论与实践意义。本文将针对目前昆虫体内转运双链 RNA 的 3 种方法进行阐述, 并对其在害虫控制的应用进行分析。

1 显微注射法

在 RNA 干扰研究的早期阶段, 显微注射主要应用于线虫中 (Fire *et al.*, 1998); 随着显微注射出现在果蝇中 (Kennerdell and Carthew, 1998), 显微注射法成为了线虫和昆虫中广泛使用并有效引入双链 RNA 的方法之一 (表 1)。

黑腹果蝇是双翅目的模式物种, 也是第一个成功进行 RNA 干扰的昆虫。通过显微注射双链 RNA 的方法, 抑制了 *frizzled* 以及 *frizzled 2* 基因的表达 (Kennerdell and Carthew, 1998)。到了 2000 年, 随着果蝇基因组测序的完成和发表, RNA 干扰很快成为双翅目昆虫研究功能性基因组学的常用方法。随着其他昆虫的基因组的相继测序与发表, 例如西方蜜蜂 (Weinstock *et al.*, 2006)、赤拟谷盗 (Richards *et al.*, 2008)。这些物种很快成为 RNA 干扰研究的热点, 因为它们的基因信息已经清楚, 但其基因的功能未知。

赤拟谷盗是鞘翅目的模式昆虫, 严重危害储存谷物的世界性害虫。比起果蝇, 注射法在赤拟谷盗的成功率非常高 (Tomoyasu and Denell, 2004)。一般来说, 幼虫和成虫均可进行双链 RNA 的注射, 幼虫主要注射在背部节间, 成虫主要注射在翅下组织。由于赤拟谷盗和果蝇是 RNA 干扰实验常用的两个

物种,关于这两个物种的显微注射方法,目前也有相关的标准方法的发表 (Misquitta *et al.*, 2008; Posnien *et al.*, 2009)。

鳞翅目昆虫中,注射法可以将双链 RNA 成功运送到昆虫体内 (Lu *et al.*, 2015),但 RNA 干扰的成功率却不高 (Terenius *et al.*, 2011)。通过对鳞翅目昆虫相关实验的总结与分析,结果表明这个物种 RNA 干扰成功率在不同种类中的差异性非常高。鳞翅目 RNA 干扰效率的多变性,可能与不同物种、组织、生长阶段、双链 RNA 的浓度与量、目的基因等有关 (Swevers *et al.*, 2011; Terenius *et al.*, 2011)。目前发表的文章中,成功次数较高的物种包括家蚕和烟草天蛾 *Manduca sexta*,可能由于这两个物种为昆虫的模式生物,实验较多,成功率也较高 (Terenius *et al.*, 2011)。数据统计表明, RNA 干扰作用于不同组织的效率也不同,血细胞、脂肪体、中肠的成功率较高,而表皮的成功率最低。 RNA 干扰的目的基因也影响 RNA 干扰的效率,其中研究免疫基因的 RNA 干扰,成功率较高。有关鳞翅目昆虫 RNA 干扰相关的结果统计,可参考 Terenius 等人发表的综述 (Terenius *et al.*, 2011)。

西方蜜蜂是膜翅目的模式昆虫,注射双链 RNA

也可抑制相关基因的表达 (Farooqui *et al.*, 2003; Gatehouse *et al.*, 2004; Aronstein and Saldivar, 2005)。除了以上提到的模式昆虫,显微注射也可以应用到其他昆虫中引起 RNA 干扰。成功的例子包括豌豆蚜 *Acyrtosiphon pisum* (Sapountzis *et al.*, 2014)、德国小蠊 *Blattella germanica* (Lin *et al.*, 2014)、地中海蟋蟀 *Gryllus bimaculatus* (Uryu *et al.*, 2013)、肩突硬蜱 *Ixodes scapularis* (Karim *et al.*, 2010)、二斑叶螨 *Tetranychus urticae* (Grbic *et al.*, 2011)、东 苯 蝗 *Romalea microptera* (Tetlak *et al.*, 2015)等。

通过显微注射运送双链 RNA,能够直接迅速将双链 RNA 运送到目的组织或血淋巴中,避免外表皮、肠道上皮细胞等障碍;另外,注射法能够将确定数量的双链 RNA 注射到昆虫体内。当然,显微注射也有其缺点,要求操作人员更精确的操作、需要对操作方法进行优化、实验时长比较久;同时,注射针头的选择、适宜的注射体积、注射的部位等也是非常重要的,在不同物种之间的差异会非常大 (表 2)。例如,实验证明,注射量对豌豆蚜的存活量十分关键 (Jaubert-Possamai *et al.*, 2007)。因此实施实验前,要慎重考虑这些可能影响的因素。

表 1 常见昆虫不同 RNA 干扰方式的成功率列表							
Table 1 Lists of the successful rates of different RNAi methods applied in insects							
所属的目 Orders	昆虫种 Species	显微注射 Microinjection	细菌表达 Bacteria expression	直接合成 Direct synthesis	转基因植株 Transgenic plants	浸泡 Soaking	转染 Transfection
双翅目 Diptera	黑腹果蝇 <i>Drosophila melanogaster</i>	+	n. d.	+	n. d.	+	+
	冈比亚按蚊 <i>Anopheles gambiae</i>	+	+	+	n. d.	n. d.	+
	赤拟谷盗 <i>Tribolium castaneum</i>	+	+	+	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
鞘翅目 Coleoptera	马铃薯甲虫 <i>Leptinotarsa decemlineata</i>	+	+	+	+	n. d.	n. d.
	玉米根虫 <i>Diabrotica virgifera</i>	+	+	+	+	n. d.	n. d.
鳞翅目 Lepidoptera	家蚕 <i>Bombyx mori</i>	+	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	+	+
	烟草天蛾 <i>Manduca sexta</i>	+	+	+	+	n. d.	n. d.
膜翅目 Hymenoptera	西方蜜蜂 <i>Apis mellifera</i>	+	+	+	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
直翅目 Orthoptera	飞蝗 <i>Locusta migratoria</i>	+	n. d.	+	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
同翅目 Homoptera	豌豆蚜 <i>Acyrtosiphon pisum</i>	+	n. d.	+	+	n. d.	n. d.
+ + + : 成功率高且持久 Present and robust; + + : 成功率高但不持久 Present but not robust; + : 成功率低 Not present; n. d. : 不确定 Not determined. 其中浸泡和转染为相对应的昆虫细胞 Soaking and transfection refer to the corresponding insect cells.							

2 喂食法

喂食法也是最早在秀丽隐杆线虫中发现的。用表达双链 RNA 的大肠杆菌喂食线虫,可引起功能缺

失突变体的表型 (Timmons and Fire, 1998; Timmons *et al.*, 2001),由此成为 RNA 干扰的另一手段。关于双链 RNA 的喂食,目前主要有 3 种手段:第 1 种是在细菌中表达双链 RNA,通过喂食细菌实现的;第 2 种是在体外合成双链 RNA,再把双

链 RNA 混在食物或溶液直接给昆虫食用;第 3 种是喂食能够表达双链 RNA 的转基因植物(表 1)。

细菌喂食法也是广泛应用于昆虫中的一种 RNA 干扰的方法 (Palli, 2014)。用大肠杆菌表达甜菜夜蛾 *Spodoptera exigua* 几丁质合成酶 A (SeCHSA) 的双链 RNA, 并混在人工培养基后喂食甜菜夜蛾, 可成功将双链 RNA 传送到幼虫的中肠。与对照相比, 取食表达双链 RNA 的细菌的甜菜夜蛾幼虫, 其生长发育受到抑制, 死亡率也更高, 并且 SeCHSA 基因的表达也受到抑制。SeCHSA 是几丁质合成酶, 主要表达在昆虫的外表皮和气管中, 并非中肠的基因; 然而通过中肠对双链 RNA 的消化和吸收, 可成功沉默几丁质合成酶的表达, 这表明 RNA 干扰的系统性能够被诱导 (Tian *et al.*, 2009)。RNA 干扰的效率与细菌培养液的剂量成正相关。当使用 3 种不同剂量的细菌培养液去喂食甜菜夜蛾, 结果发现, 细菌培养液的剂量越高, 甜菜夜蛾的致死率和基因表达抑制的程度就越高, 这表明了充分抑制基因需要足够量的双链 RNA。另外, SeCHSA 基因下调表达, 是在甜菜夜蛾喂食后的第 7 天, 而不是第 3 天或第 5 天, 这也说明了 RNA 干扰的诱发需要双链 RNA 在虫体内积累的过程。除了甜菜夜蛾, 细菌喂食法也应用于玉米根虫、马铃薯甲虫、苹淡褐卷蛾 *Epiphyas postvittana*、桔小实蝇 *Bactrocera dorsalis* 等 (Li *et al.*, 2011; Zhu *et al.*, 2011)。

直接喂食法是通过在体外人工合成双链 RNA, 再混进昆虫的食物中, 用于昆虫的喂食。实验证明, 含有 E 亚基的 vATPase 基因的双链 RNA 人工培养基表面, 分别喂食赤拟谷盗、豌豆蚜、烟草天蛾, 可导致 50% ~ 70% 的死亡率 (Whyard *et al.*, 2009)。直接喂食法在马铃薯甲虫成功的例子也不少 (Swevers *et al.*, 2013; Kong *et al.*, 2014)。然而, 这种方法并不适用于果蝇中, 并不能引起 RNA 干扰 (Whyard *et al.*, 2009)。直接喂食法的另一应用是制成双链 RNA 的液滴, 用于幼虫的喂食, 也能抑制对应基因的表达 (Turner *et al.*, 2006)。液滴法目前成功的物种, 包括苹淡褐卷蛾 (Turner *et al.*, 2006)、小菜蛾 (Bautista *et al.*, 2009) 等。此外, 利用毛细管喂食双链 RNA 溶液, 也是一种对肩突硬蜱有干扰作用的手段 (Soares *et al.*, 2005)。另外, 也可以利用静电作用力, 将双链 RNA 包裹在壳聚糖内部形成了纳米粒子, 直接喂食昆虫 (Zhang *et al.*, 2010)。纳米粒子既可大规模生产, 也可使双链 RNA 在进入昆虫体内时更稳定, 因此能够提高

RNA 干扰的效率。

喂食法的第 3 种手段是通过表达双链 RNA 的转基因植物, 将昆虫基因作为靶标, 提高植物的抗虫性 (Baum *et al.*, 2007; Mao *et al.*, 2011; Yu *et al.*, 2016)。目前, 利用转基因植物抑制昆虫基因表达, 在鳞翅目、鞘翅目、半翅目昆虫中得以成功实现 (Baum *et al.*, 2007; Pitino *et al.*, 2011; Zha *et al.*, 2011; Xiong *et al.*, 2013)。转基因植物一般选用模式植物, 如水稻 *Oryza sativa* (Zha *et al.*, 2011)、烟草 *Nicotiana tabacum* (Mao *et al.*, 2007; Thakur *et al.*, 2014)、拟南芥 *Arabidopsis thaliana* 和棉花 *Gossypium hirsutum* (Mao *et al.*, 2011)。通过转基因棉花表达 CYP6AE14 基因的双链 RNA, 有效提高了棉花对棉铃虫的抗性 (Mao *et al.*, 2011)。一般认为, 植物的叶绿体不具备 RNA 干扰的机制; 然而最新的研究表明, 叶绿体也能够稳定表达双链 RNA, 作用于昆虫的目标基因, 引起昆虫的死亡 (Zhang *et al.*, 2015)。通过转基因手段, 让土豆的叶绿体持续产生马铃薯甲虫 β -actin 基因的双链 RNA, 可导致取食土豆叶片的马铃薯甲虫幼虫在 5 d 内的死亡率达 100%, 起到代替化学杀虫剂的目的 (Zhang *et al.*, 2015)。当然, 转基因手段要求我们选择合适的基因, 既能控制虫害, 又对其他动物、人类和环境不造成危害。

通过喂食法转运双链 RNA 到昆虫体内, 具有以下一些优点, 省力、省时、易操作 (Tian *et al.*, 2009; Tian *et al.*, 2015)。对于高通量基因的筛选, 特别是害虫的防治, 喂食法的应用性就更强 (Kamath *et al.*, 2001)。对于个体比较小的昆虫, 例如蚜虫、1-2 龄幼虫, 喂食法不容易对它们造成机械伤害 (Araujo *et al.*, 2006; Tian *et al.*, 2009; Walshe *et al.*, 2009)。然而, 喂食法也有局限性。比如, 合适的双链 RNA 量的确定, 不同物种所需量的范围不同, 需要大量实验去验证 (Surakasi *et al.*, 2011)。一般来说, 喂食法所需双链 RNA 的量要比显微注射的多, 因此双链 RNA 成本要比显微注射高 (表 2)。另外, 喂食法并不适用所有的物种。例如, 在秀丽隐杆线虫、长红锥蝽 *Rhodnius prolixus* 中, 喂食法的 RNA 干扰效果不如注射法明显 (Hunter, 1999; Araujo *et al.*, 2006)。在斜纹夜蛾 *Spodoptera litura* 中, 喂食中肠专一的氨基肽酶 N 的双链 RNA, 并不能诱导 RNA 干扰 (Rajagopal *et al.*, 2002)。中肠是双链 RNA 吸收的场所, 喂食法的成功与否, 也与中肠的环境有关; 优化双链 RNA 的浓度, 提高 RNA 干扰的效率, 是非常关键的因素 (Turner *et al.*, 2006; Luo *et al.*, 2013)。

3 浸泡与转染法

近年来,将实验材料直接浸泡在双链 RNA 溶液中而引起 RNA 干扰的方法,因其方便操作,也变得越来越常见;这种方法也称为细胞外 RNA 干扰。第一例浸泡法的实验也是在线虫中发现的,直接将线虫浸泡在双链 RNA 溶液中,即可发生 RNA 干扰 (Tabara *et al.*, 1998)。这种方法也有利于高通量的 RNA 干扰筛选实验 (Maeda *et al.*, 2001)。

在昆虫当中,大部分浸泡实验主要在细胞株中实施(表 1) (Zhou *et al.*, 2014)。第一株成功进行浸泡实验的细胞是果蝇胚胎的 S2 细胞 (Clemens *et al.*, 2000)。将双链 RNA 加入到细胞培养基中,可抑制相关基因的表达 (Clemens *et al.*, 2000)。因此,浸泡法成为 S2 细胞最常用的诱导 RNA 干扰的方法 (March and Bentley, 2007; Shah and Forstemann, 2008)。在其他的细胞株中,浸泡法也可以成功诱导 RNA 干扰。草地贪夜蛾 *Spodoptera frugiperda* 卵巢的 Sf21 细胞,也可通过浸泡双链 RNA 溶液 (Sivakumar *et al.*, 2007) 和 siRNA 溶液 (Agrawal *et al.*, 2004),抑制目的基因的表达。

大豆尺蠖 *Chrysodeixis includens* 胚胎的细胞 (CiE1) 也可以进行双链 RNA 的吸收。转染双链 RNA 到 CiE1 细胞中可引起特定基因表达的下调 (Johnson *et al.*, 2010)。斜纹夜蛾的 S12 细胞和家蚕的 Bm5 细胞曾进行过双链 RNA 的吸收实验,但并没有明显的效果 (Terenius *et al.*, 2011)。

然而,并不是所有细胞株都适合浸泡法。在粉纹夜蛾 *Trichoplusia ni* 的 Hi5 细胞中,将双链 RNA 直接加入细胞培养基中,并不能引起 RNA 干扰 (Beck and Strand, 2005)。而通过细胞转染的方法,则可引起 RNA 干扰;类似的结果在 Sf21 细胞中也有发现 (Valdes *et al.*, 2003)。

转染法被认为是细胞内的 RNA 干扰(表 1),因为它可以通过转染剂将双链 RNA 直接传送到细胞内;因此,比起浸泡法,转染法更有效地将双链 RNA 转运到细胞中 (Swevers *et al.*, 2014; Wu *et al.*, 2016)。Whyard 等 (2009) 在果蝇的幼虫身上测试了 TransFectin, DMRIE-C, Cellfectin 和 Lipofectamine 2000 等几种转染试剂,转染法的基因表达下调量 (31% ~ 52%) 比浸泡法 (5% ~ 8%) 更明显;这说明了转染有利于虫体对双链 RNA 的吸收,更有利促进 RNA 干扰反应。值得注意的是,在

进行转染法时,转染试剂会影响双链 RNA 的转染率。对大豆尺蠖的 CiE1 细胞,利用 Cellfectin, Cellfectin II, Lipofectin, Lipofectamine 2000, ExGen 500 和 Metafectine 进行双链 RNA 的转染,结果表明,Lipofectin 作为转染试剂时,转染的成功率是最高的 (Johnson *et al.*, 2010)。

关于诱导昆虫细胞株 RNA 干扰的因子,目前也有相关的报道。在果蝇细胞中,双链 RNA 的吸收和内化是通过清道夫受体的胞吞作用,如 SR-CI 和 Eater。在果蝇的 S2 细胞当中,SR-CI 和 Eater 介导了超过 90% 的双链 RNA 的吸收 (Ulvila *et al.*, 2006)。在隐杆线虫中,通道形成跨膜蛋白 SID-1 可以帮忙双链 RNA 的内化 (Winston *et al.*, 2002)。因此,在 S2 细胞中表达线虫的 SID-1 蛋白,可以帮助双链 RNA 的转运 (Feinberg and Hunter, 2003)。在家蚕中,构建表达 SID-1 的 BmN4 细胞,也能够引起 RNA 干扰 (Kobayashi *et al.*, 2012; Mon *et al.*, 2012; Mon *et al.*, 2013);同样的效果在草地贪夜蛾的 Sf9 细胞中也已被验证 (Xu *et al.*, 2013)。另外,siRNA 干扰通路中的 Dicer-2, Ago-2 和 R2D2,也在部分研究中证明可以促进 RNA 干扰 (Kolliopoulou and Swevers, 2013; Zhu *et al.*, 2015)。

尽管具有外皮,通过整个昆虫虫体来吸收双链 RNA 也是可能的。将双链 RNA 直接喷洒在刚孵化的亚洲玉米螟 *Ostrinia furnalis* 的幼虫上,能够导致 40% ~ 100% 的死亡率,qPCR 实验也证实死亡率与基因下调表达量是一致的。这种简单可应用的运送双链 RNA 的方法证明,双链 RNA 可渗透昆虫外表皮并引发 RNA 干扰的可能性。通过这种高通量的双链 RNA 运送方法能够促进基于 RNA 干扰原理的害虫防治 (Wang *et al.*, 2011)。

虽然浸泡与转染法引起 RNA 干扰的效率不如显微注射法那样明显,但其效果和喂食法类似 (Tabara *et al.*, 1998)。比起注射法,浸泡与转染法更方便更容易操作。因此,此方法可运用于高通量 RNA 干扰的筛选 (Perrimon and Mathey-Prevot, 2007),以及表型特征基因组分析的研究 (表 2) (Sugimoto, 2004)。大规模的 RNA 干扰分析使得基因功能信息分析的数量迅速上升 (Perrimon and Mathey-Prevot, 2007)。但是,由于昆虫虫体外表皮的阻碍,浸泡法更适用于昆虫的细胞。

4 结语

RNA 干扰是目前研究功能基因组强有力的工具

表 2 双链 RNA 不同转运方式优缺点比较

转运方式 Delivery methods	优点 Advantages	缺点 Disadvantages	用途/应用 Usage/application
显微注射 Microinjection	目标的部位或组织明确,作用效果快,双链 RNA 的量明确易掌控	操作技巧的要求高,操作参数需优化,操作过程相对耗时,不适合个体较小的昆虫	基因的功能性研究、实验室应用
喂食法 Feeding	易操作,操作时间短,细菌法双链 RNA 产量高,适合个体小的昆虫	目标基因和作用组织不明确,双链 RNA 使用量大且需要优化,直接合成双链 RNA 的成本高	高通量的基因研究、大面积的应用
浸泡与转染 Soaking and transfection	操作简便,操作时间短	昆虫的外表皮不容易直接吸收双链 RNA,大部分局限于细胞实验中	大规模 RNA 干扰的筛选,主要应用于细胞研究

之一,并且在害虫防治方面显现出可靠的潜能 (Dillen *et al.*, 2016)。在昆虫研究和害虫防治中为了达到明显有效的 RNA 干扰,其中最大的挑战就是保证双链 RNA 顺利地转运到细胞和昆虫的体内。因此,在设计 RNA 干扰实验时,除了考虑不同的 RNA 转运方法,也要考虑到以下几方面的因素,提高双链 RNA 的 RNA 干扰率。

双链 RNA 的长度也能影响 RNA 干扰的效果。在果蝇的胚胎中,长片段(400 bp)的双链 RNA 的干扰效果(86%)比短片段(21 bp)的 siRNA (19% ~ 24%)明显 (Whyard *et al.*, 2009)。在果蝇的 S2 细胞中,长片段的双链 RNA 也显示了较高的 RNA 干扰效果 (Saleh *et al.*, 2006)。然而在草地贪夜蛾的 Sf21 细胞中,短片段的 siRNA 具有较高的 RNA 干扰 (Agrawal *et al.*, 2004)。这说明不同物种的 RNA 干扰,对小分子 RNA 的长度要求不高;因此在进行 RNA 干扰实验时,最好能将不同片段长度的小分子 RNA 进行测试,以便更好地达到 RNA 干扰的效果。

双链 RNA 在细胞和昆虫体内的稳定性也会影响 RNA 干扰的效率。研究表明,双链 RNA 在甲虫和蛾类的固体培养基中 3 d 后的量下降 14%,在液体培养基中可下降 32%;6 d 后的量分别下降 31% 和 56% (Whyard *et al.*, 2009)。双链 RNA 也可以被昆虫组织本身的核酸酶所降解 (Terenius *et al.*, 2011)。美国牧草盲蝽 *Lygus lineolaris* 的唾液中存在双链 RNA 的降解酶 (dsRNase),可以将双链 RNA 降解 (Allen and Walker, 2012)。我们的研究也表明,家蚕的双链 RNA 降解酶 BmdsRNase 能在家蚕 Bm5 细胞表达,并降解双链 RNA,影响 RNA 干扰的效率 (Liu *et al.*, 2012)。

双链 RNA 的非特异性反应也会影响 RNA 干扰率。我们也发现,双链 RNA 除了引起 RNA 干扰反应,也会引起免疫反应,影响免疫基因的表达,从而降低 RNA 干扰的效率 (Liu *et al.*, 2013, 2014)。

因此在设计 RNA 干扰实验时,也应考虑这些因素。出于不同的研究目的,不同的双链 RNA 转运方法适用于不同的项目研究。显微注射法能够将精确数量的双链 RNA 注射到确切的实验部位,更适合实验室基因功能的研究;喂食法操作简单快速,有利于高通量的基因筛选;浸泡与转染法更方便于细胞的实验研究(表 2)。我们相信,随着 RNA 干扰技术的完善、对 RNA 干扰机制的认识和双链 RNA 转运效率的提高, RNA 干扰将会更有效地运用于基因功能的研究和害虫的防治。

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